

~~SECRET~~ CONFIDENTIAL

ER 6-5268

The Honorable  
The Secretary of Defense  
Department of Defense  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I have been following with great interest the progress in the development of the earth satellite vehicle plans. I should like to state the concern of this Agency with both the first launching of the earth satellite and its possible use in advanced form to collect intelligence data.

In addition to the cogent scientific arguments advanced in support of the development of earth satellites, there is little doubt but what the nation that first successfully launches the earth satellite, and thereby introduces the age of space travel, will gain incalculable international prestige and recognition. In many respects it will be comparable to the first release of nuclear energy. Our scientific community as well as the nation would gain invaluable respect and confidence should our country be the first to launch the satellite. Consequently, I feel the psychological impact of this development on friendly, neutral and Communist-controlled countries, particularly when we are anticipating a prolonged state of cold war, is one of the major arguments justifying its prompt development.

I should be happy to discuss the matter further at your convenience and to give any support the Agency might be able to provide in evaluating earth satellite plans. Because of the international and diplomatic implications of this project, I am sending this information to the Secretary of State.

Sincerely yours,

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*Allen W. Dulles*  
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CONCURRENCE:

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